

Central Park's Queer Colony of Baboons.

The central Park menagerie is now the home of the most interesting colony of monkeys which it has ever been the good fortune of that institution to possess.

These animals are baboons of the *Ilamias* variety, and natives of Abyssinia, that region of Africa which is of the greatest interest to the civilized world at present.

The new arrivals are all young and not full grown. They have long gray hair, long arms and legs, and are remarkably active. They are rather thin. Their faces are free from hair and are pale in color. In shape the faces are long and thin, and give the owners a decidedly thoughtful and somewhat world-weary expression. In spite of their appearance, however, they take a very keen and fresh interest in life and all the affairs of the world, so far as they can observe them.

The hamadryas is at once the most refined and dignified of the monkeys in appearance. He is without the coarseness of the longer apes and without the ludicrous characteristics of the smaller ones. When you look at his grave and reverend features it is hard to believe that he is forever contemplating some mischief. At a moment when his thoughts seem to be intent on his old home and the parents from whom he has been torn, he will lean forward and help himself to a handful of feathers from a woman's Easter bonnet.

The species is found in many parts of Africa. The members are noted for their gregarious, garrulous and sociable habits. They dwell in well organized communities, which have been described by naturalists as villages. Usually they make their home in a rocky place.

They go forth in parties to forage and to plunder. They are fond of many forms of vegetables, including corn, cabbages, melons and coconuts. Cultivated products have a considerable attraction for them, as the South African farmers have discovered to their cost.

It is pretty well authenticated that when the baboons go trespassing on private property they establish sentinels to give warning to the plunderers of the approach of a man. They have extraordinary powers of sight and hearing, which give them a great advantage in this sort of work.

When they are engaged in stealing melons, pumpkins or other heavy articles, they establish a chain of workers, extending from the cultivated field to some safe retreat. Then the workers in the field pick the pumpkins and they are passed along from hand to hand.

These baboons have often been domesticated and then they make very intelligent members of the household, even more so than dogs. But they must be expected to depart occasionally from the strict path of propriety. A farmer's wife left a tame hamadryas to watch a pot in which a chicken was boiling. The smell was too appetizing for his honesty and he raised the lid and picked a small piece of chicken. He continued the process until only the skeleton of the bird remained. Knowing there would be trouble when his mistress returned, he slipped out into the farmyard and prouced the dead body of a crow which he had been saving for a little banquet of his own. He plucked the feathers and with a sigh of reluctance dropped it into the pot. Then he went on watching as if nothing odd had happened.

These baboons in their wild state are the noisiest of monkeys. They utter a sound very much like a dog's bark. It is plain that they are able to make a good many things understood to one another. They hold a sort of parliament, in which they sit around and vociferate and jestulate with as much energy as the members of the French Chamber of Deputies.

A hot debate in the baboon parliament on the question of melon culture is very entertaining.

THE DOG WAS A RAT.

The Latest French Fraud Disguises a Rodent and Sells It For a Thoroughbred Canine.

Dog sharpers have not reached the high development in their profession in New York City that their brethren of Paris and London have attained. A charming leader of Parisian society, an enthusiast on the subject of toy dogs, while in the Champs Elysees, purchased from a peddling peddler a beautiful toy poodle, whose feet attracted her attention by their extremely delicate appearance. She took the treasure home in her carriage and summoned the household to the salon to receive congratulations upon her dainty purchase. She sat dear little Flido upon the carpet and was horrified to see it at once run up the curtain. The poodle was nothing more than a common house rat neatly sewn into the skin of a baby poodle.

Miss Helen Gould's Rare \$35,000 Palm.

It is not every one who, even if they had the money, would expend \$35,000 on any plant that grows on the face of the earth. Yet that is the sum that Miss Helen Gould is reported to have paid for a rare palm that is now to be seen in one of her handsome conservatories at Tarrytown.

The palm, though it may be, and no doubt is, an interesting and valuable specimen of its kind, has certainly little to recommend it in the line of beauty, as the extreme length of the stems gives it a bare look, while the leaves, which are so high up as to be scarcely visible, are very awkward and ungraceful in appearance.

Many of the other palms in the conservatory, though probably of very much less value, are yet infinitely prettier to look at. However, "every eye forms its own beauty," and to the ardent horticulturist this particular palm is for many reasons the ne plus ultra of elegance and general desirability. It has, moreover, one especial quality peculiar to its kind that renders it extremely interesting, and also, in its native soil, of immense value to travellers.

Indeed, the name by which it is more generally known is the "traveller's tree"—it other title being *Ravenna Madagascariensis*. When the stem of this "traveller's tree" is properly tapped a stream of clear water flows out that is excellent for drinking purposes; no matter how great the heat of the climate, the water remains always cold and pure. Naturally this quality renders the palm of incalculable assistance to many a benighted traveller.

As indicated by its name, this palm comes from Madagascar. It has only been in Miss Gould's possession for about three weeks. It is over thirty feet in height, reaching to the top of the large conservatory, and, though it will not grow much more in that direction probably, it will spread out more. There are at present ten long stems on it, of great thickness at the roots, but tapering considerably up to the leaves, which latter must be some six feet long. Should the palm grow taller, the large wooden box or tub, in which it is planted, will have to be sunk in a deep hole dug out of the floor for that purpose. This has had to be done in several cases, for some of the palms there must be close upon forty feet high. The temperature of the conservatory in which the "traveller's tree" has its abode is maintained at about 75 degrees.

Miss Gould exhibited a quantity of choice palms at the World's Fair and obtained a medal for them, while her "side-de-camp," Mr. Mangold, received a diploma.

The conservatories at Lyndhurst—the name of the house—are magnificent. The assortment of azaleas and of orchids, in particular, is most beautiful, containing many extremely valuable specimens.

There are, indeed, interesting rarities in almost every class of flowers and of plants. Foremost among them comes what is called the "rice plant," the leaves of which are all delicately perforated and are really very beautiful. This plant only grows under water and is therefore kept in a square wooden tank. Like the above-mentioned palm, it comes from Madagascar.

Miss Gould takes a great interest in her handsome conservatories and inspects them personally every day. She also allows them to be open to the public, and many people, particularly artists, avail themselves of her kindness and derive great pleasure and often much assistance from her splendid and valuable collection of flowers and plants.

Women Cyclists to Make a Tour of Europe.

Two young women of Delaware, Ohio, are about to start on a bicycling tour of Europe. They are Mrs. George Brown Allen, daughter of W. B. Brown, a wealthy banker of Delaware, and Miss Gertrude Smith, of the St. Smith Sisters' Concert Company. Both are said to be members of the most fashionable and refined society of Delaware, Ohio.

They have just received their suits from the establishment of a well-known New York tailor. The skirts are made of rough dress goods, and the rest of the costume in each case consists of a reefer coat, heavy low tan shoes, dark corduroy leggings, Tam o'Shanter hats and heavy gauntlets. The costumes have been pronounced perfectly lovely. The fair bicyclists also have new machines.

They will sail on May 20 on the St. Paul. After staying in London for the operatic season and to catch a glimpse of high society, they will mount their wheels and ride away.

They will make a tour of England, Scotland and Ireland. They expect to be in Dublin in the first week of August, when an international meeting of bicyclists will take place. After that they will cross over to the Continent.



A Mayor's Strange Punishment of a Thief.

Wilkesbarre, Pa., has produced an original American Solomon in the person of Mayor Nichols.

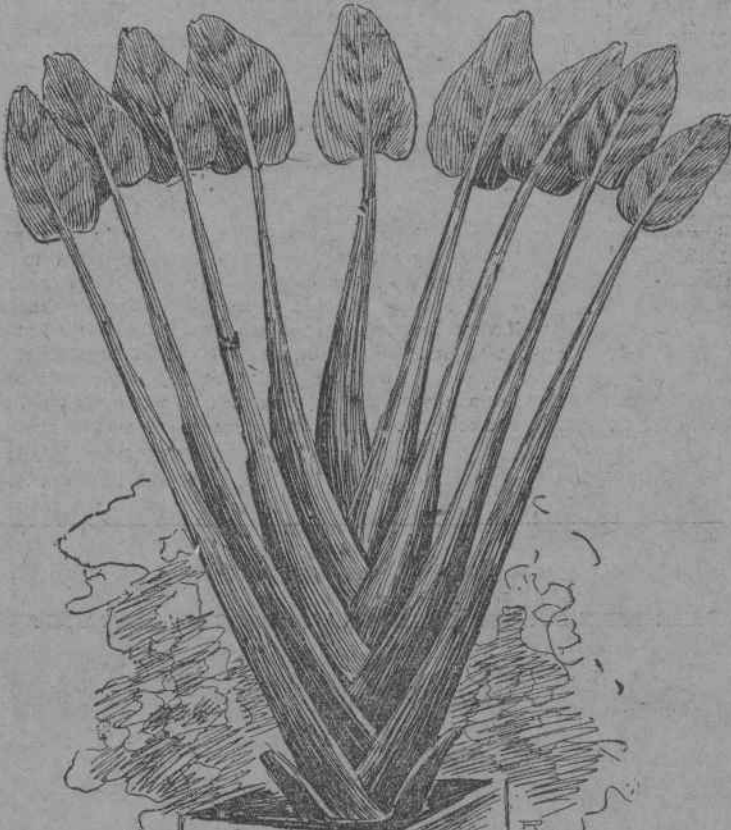
By the judgment of this dignitary a woman was sent out into the streets of Wilkesbarre wearing a placard on which these words were inscribed:

I AM A SHOE THIEF, LOOK OUT!

The woman is a Mrs. Mary Jones. She was brought before the Mayor charged with stealing a pair of shoes. The case was proved against her, and it only remained for the Mayor to pronounce sentence.

The woman pleaded that she had a home to look after and that if she went to prison it would be neglected and she would be ruined. The Mayor admitted the force of this. Moreover, she was not a dangerous criminal, and as a frugal public officer he had to consider the expense to the city of keeping her in jail. On the other hand, he had to fulfill his duty of protecting property.

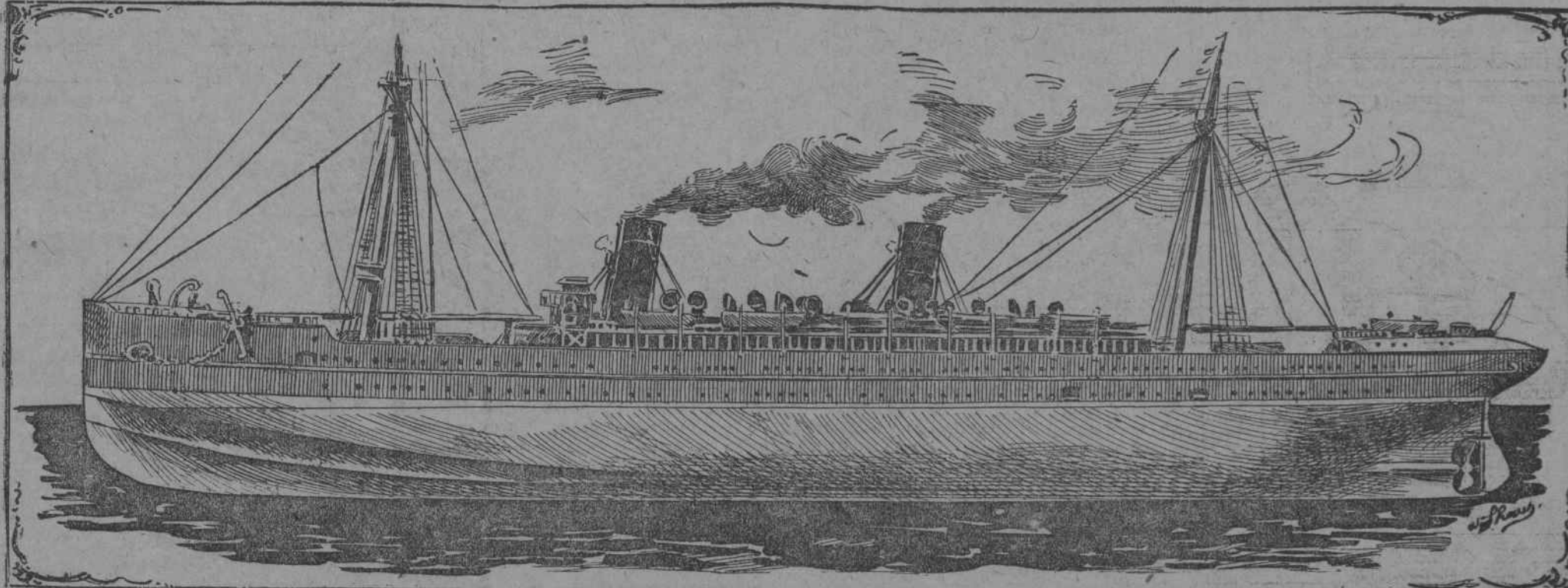
After mature consideration he offered Mrs. Jones the option of going to jail or of wearing a placard warning the public against her thieving propensities. The latter appeared to him a sufficient punishment and to answer every purpose of the law. Mrs. Jones with tears accepted the placard.



Helen Gould's \$35,000 Palm.



These Women Will Tour Europe on a Wheel.



The Proposed Speed Groove on an Ocean Steamer.

Wonderful Things Due to Roentgen Rays.

There seems to be no end to the wonders the X ray can accomplish, and one of the latest things it is hoped it can do is to restore the sight of persons supposed to be hopelessly blind. Here are some of the things the new discovery has led to or is likely to bring about.

Professor F. G. Gibbons, of Syracuse, classes among the possibilities of the Roentgen rays the restoration of eyesight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. The Doctor believes that Nicola Tesla will be the first to really startle the world with an exposition of what the recently discovered force is capable of. Dr. Gibbons, in an interview states that he has been experimenting not so much on photography through the human body as to make the discovery useful for optical vision. He says: "I have for many years in my practice thrown lights into different parts of the hand for the purpose of discovering foreign substances. In this I have used largely a small incandescent light. If you hold your hand close to an ordinary incandescent light and hold between the light and your hand an opaque body such as a knife or a spoon you will see the shadow of the metal body through your fingers. I believe the X rays can be used in the restoring of sight and hearing."

It has been proved that with the X ray accidental flaws in steel can be detected. This is equally valuable in the examination of bicycle tubing, especially that used in the construction of the head and front forks. Dr. T. S. Middleton, of the Philadelphia Medical-Chirurgical College, is positive that he will soon be able to photograph a brain. Edison says that this is impossible with the Roentgen ray as at present understood. Dr. Middleton expects this week to secure a photograph of the inner organism of the ear by placing the ray within the month.

Dr. Leavett, an American dentist in Paris, claims that by use of the Roentgen rays he is able to dissipate the toothache, but refuses to make public the details of what is, if true, a most remarkable discovery.

From Vienna comes the story that in the local Museum of Natural History there is an Egyptian mummy which, although human in form, from the inscriptions on it is supposed to be an ibis. It being too rare and valuable an object to risk the damage of opening, it was taken to the School of Photography and submitted to the X ray, the result being a picture resembling the outline of a large bird skeleton, proving beyond doubt the nature of the contents.

In consequence of experiments with the Roentgen rays, enabling the reading through the envelopes of the contents of enclosed letters, Berlin chemists are making experiments with a substance for the manufacture of envelopes which will be impervious to the rays.

Professor Doelter, of the Gray University, has established the fact that the Roentgen rays are of great value in the detection of imitation diamonds. Real diamonds will divert the rays to a certain extent without diminishing their power, while glass, paste or any other substitute will retain a greater or less amount of the rays without diverting them. Since the rays can be produced easily, this will soon become an important factor with diamond dealers.

New Scheme to Make Ocean Steamers Go Faster.

A novel and simple device has been patented and was successfully tried in this city last week, which its inventors claim will enable steamers to increase their speed 20 per cent without any additional expense. By this means the trip across the Atlantic Ocean, it is believed, may be cut down one day, so that Queenstown and Sandy Hook will be twenty-four hours nearer each other than they are at present.

Thus the *Lucania* could make the trip in four days, seven hours and a few minutes. As vessels of that size are, while at sea, under an expense of many thousand dollars per day, the saving would be very large. The bonus now given for war ships above a guaranteed speed could also be secured by the contractors by means of this device, which adds little or nothing to the first cost of the vessel.

The patent has been taken out on a groove which is cut in the side of the vessel, running aft, about one-fourth of her length. This groove starts near the bow, above the water line, and runs aft on either side, ending some distance below the water line.

The groove in the side of the vessel is a continuous indentation with a well-rounded shoulder. It is deepest near its center, tapering off from that point both fore and aft.

The natural effect of this groove is the case of a steamer going through the water is to force her bow higher than it would be under normal circumstances. The water which is crowded out of her way by the ship forces itself into this big groove in her side, exerting a constant upward pressure.

The effect of this is to lift the bow of the ship so that she makes less displacement and offers less resistance. But when she loses her speed she sinks at the bow again to her normal depth.

A test of this device with working models was made in this city last week. The models used were fac-similes of the steamships *Paris* and *New York*.

They were operated by storage batteries and raced against each other in the big swimming tank of the New Manhattan Athletic Club. Herbert Wycherly, of this city, and Dr. J. Wilton Barlow, of Brooklyn, the inventors, explained the principle to Commodore Flaxler, of the American Yacht Club; Professor Hallcock, of Columbia College; Colonel Rush Hawkins and other guests who had been invited to witness the test.

Each of the little boats was about three feet long. They were built of brass, and were identical in every respect save that one had grooves in her sides and the other had none. The swimming tank in which the boats were placed is 125 feet long, and at a given signal they were started together at an equal rate of speed. The little boats had gone but a few feet when the one in the sides of which the grooves had been cut began to gain perceptibly upon the other. The latter was raised to the speed increased.

The models were timed with stop watches. It was found that the boat with the grooves in her sides covered the distance in forty-three seconds, while the other required one minute and ten seconds to make the trip to the end of the tank. The return trip down the tank was made in forty-four seconds and one minute and eleven seconds respectively.

In order to show that the difference in speed was due to the grooves in the sides of the boat Dr. Barlow fitted thin metal strips into them. The two boats were again started down the tank, but this time they made the voyage together.

The grooves being closed by the metal strips prevented the device making its influence felt, and the boats progressed at equal speed. On the three-foot model the grooves were only one-quarter of an inch deep, and less than an inch in width.

The inventors claim that more than one groove can be built in the side of a ship like the *Campania*, thus increasing the force of the water in raising her bow. Inserting such grooves when a vessel is being built will, they claim, neither add to the expense nor weaken her structure, and a permanent increase of 20 per cent in her speed will certainly result, with no additional burning of coal. The device, it is claimed, has been tried on a model 22 feet long, with results as satisfactory as those obtained in the swimming tank of the New Manhattan Athletic Club.

The patent, it is expected, will be mutually valuable in increasing the speed of steamships, but there is no apparent reason why the same principle may not be applied to yachts and sailing vessels. The yacht of the future may have the whole side of each bow slashed with these diagonal lines, to lift her bow as she plunges through the water, thus increasing her speed by reducing her immersion and consequent resistance.



Central Park's Interesting Family of Noisy Baboons.